

NORTH SMITHFIELD

CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION

September 15, 2016

NORTH SMITHFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

CAFETERIA

2214 PROVIDENCE PIKE

7:00 PM

Minutes

I. Call to Order

Paul Vadenais called to order the regular meeting of the North Smithfield Charter Review Commission at 7:03 on September 15, 2016 at North Smithfield Elementary School.

II. Roll Call

Tracey Nangle conducted a roll call. The following persons were present: Paul Vadenais, Tony Guertin, Terri Bartomioli, Carol Drainville, Christine Charest, Larry Forti, Peg Votta – all present

III. Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting

Discussion: Error in Minutes from September 8, 2017 - Old Business – Charge to the Committee, Clarification on CRC report due date to the Town Council – should read May 1, 2017

Approved as read with clarification. Motion made by Terri Bartomioli,

seconded by Tony Guertin. Unanimous approval

Motion to waive the rules and move Items 1, 2, 3, & 4 under New Business up for immediate consideration by Christine Charest and seconded by Tony Guertin, unanimously approved.

IV. Old Business

No action taken.

V. New Business

a. Discussion with Town Planner in regards to NS Town Charter P 37, Article XII: Planning Board

i. Scope of responsibilities of the planning board – would like this revised

ii. Planning board cannot make recommendations on the 6 year comprehensive capital improvement program

iii. Thinks town would be better served by a separate capital development committee or a larger budget committee

iv. Our current budget committee has 5, he would recommend 11 as in Lincoln

v. Comprehensive Plan due June 2017, doing it now, doesn't think we will need an extension

vi. More technical than might be imagined

vii. Town Planner and the GIS specialist do the bulk of the work

viii. Ericson retiring November, may be a lapse while they look for a replacement

ix. Fine with Zoning Board of Review

x. Annual Report – suggests that the annual report be split out more between the planning board and the planning department. Technically the planning department does what the planning board wants.

**VI. Discussion with Director of Public Works in regards to Article X
Department of Public Works**

a. Maintenance of town/school properties – feels that there is potential for cooperation for the good of all

b. Not looking to merge departments but feels there is an easier solution to get the work done in a mutually agreeable way

i. Perhaps wording in charter could smooth this out

c. We have no engineering division – feels there is no need for one

i. There is a line item in his budget for consulting and engineering – picks and chooses when he uses one

VII. Discussion with Tax Assessor in regards to Article VII Department of Finance

a. Between assessing and finance – you need to get it right. Very important positions

b. Make Tax Assessor reportable to Town Administrator

c. Increase base qualifications for the position to safeguard against mistakes

d. Does not understand elected Town Administrator – relying on residents is too limiting

e. Ordinances are written in a tone so that everything is in black and white – completely overcomplicated

i. Ordinances are not working as written

ii. Salaries are extremely low

iii. We need to hold people accountable

f. Assessment Board of Review – can meet with one member – you want to have two alternates who can sit in in the absence of other board members- will give you enough to listen to the cases

VIII. Discussion with Finance Director in regards to Article VII Department of Finance and Article VIII The Budget

a. Finance Director should be part of the Budget Committee/Capital Planning Committee discussions, if not a voting member

b. P 27 section 3 – competitive bidding

i. We have the charter and a town ordinance that follows State law – wants to know which one to follow

1. We should word things so we can use master pricing agreements – charter prohibits this without getting bids, etc.

c. P 27 Section 2.1 Debt limitation without referendum – dollar amount

i. Finance Director said changing this would be dependent on how the funding process works – operational funds or debt

ii. Should this dollar amount be a percentage or a dollar amount?

d. P 25 Powers and duties

i. “prescribe uniform forms of receipts...”

e. Article 8 The Budget

i. P 32 section 8 – first sentence says town administrator shall authorize expenditures...from the appropriations on the basis of

approved allotments - can we clean up the language? Should not be open to interpretation

a. This is not the way it is happening now – everything is going before the town council now – only happening once a month

i. Causing delays

ii. Scheduled contract payments – get delayed each month

b. Should we consider addressing language that would keep town council from micromanaging?

ii. Finance director is not always able to fulfill his responsibilities as agent for the pensions, etc. Delay of getting payments in

f. Section 3 Preparation of the Budget

i. Dates should be reviewed to allow for adequate opportunity for public input and review of a completed budget

g. P25 Discussion of qualifications of finance director

h. P 30 Section 3: Budget Committee

i. Last paragraph way too broad – allows them to do anything

ii. Consider language to limit the power of non-elected officials, limit what elected officials can empower non-elected officials to do/authorize them to do

i. P31 Budget Format – Paul requested Finance Director send us a recommendation regarding how this section should read.

i. Peg asked if he has seen this level of detail of request for formatting in any other town?

Next Meeting Date: Thursday, September 22, 2016, 7PM at NSES

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn by Christine Charest, seconded by Tony Guertin

Paul Vadenais adjourned the meeting at 9:02PM.

Minutes submitted by: Tracey Nangle